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JPRS L/8708

15 October 1979

# Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 39/79)

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## NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

SAUDI ARABIA STRIVES TO LEAD GULF AREA DEFENSE

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13-19 Sep 79 pp 22 & 23

[Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has devoted huge allotments to its military defense agreement. This special message which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI has received from Riyadh sheds light on these agreements and draws general outlines for the goals of the desired military defense plan, which may be summarized in clear and simple words: that the defense security of this Arab nation will be Saudi Arabia's own security and will be bound up in its destiny with Arab security, especially the security of the sister nations which extend along the shores of the Gulf.

Riyad - "The Arab Nation"

It is no secret that, with regard to expenditure on the building of its armed forces, Saudi Arabia is seventh among the nations of the world, coming after the Soviet Union, the U.S., China, West Germany, France, and Britain.

Unofficial statistics pertaining to defense in the 1978/1979 budget are estimated at about 10 billion dollars, or slightly less than the defense budget of Iran last year.

In fact, there are many political, geographic, and economic reasons which justify this expansion in military expenditures, for Saudi Arabia is a country of vast dimensions, whose area amounts to one-third that of India.

Furthermore, it possesses huge petroleum resources, which put it in first place among the nations of OPEC, and it must protect these resources constantly. Likewise, the frontiers of the country are far-flung. Its shores face many waters, which are considered navigational arteries. The petroleum tankers which traverse these waters are exposed to numerous security risks and hazards.

When Saudi Arabia saw the Egyptian forces being transported 3,000 kilometers to land in Yemen during the first half of the 1960's, it perceived the need to review its defense plan.

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#### The Real Building Operation

However, the real operation of building the armed forces, in the military sense, is a defense plan which did not actually begin till five years ago. The climax came in the transaction which the kingdom concluded with the United States for 60 F-15 aircraft, which are considered the most up-to-date and strongest aircraft known in the U.S. and Western arsenal.

Although Israel has concluded a transaction for these aircraft, nevertheless the Zionist lobby in Congress set Washington in a turmoil for President Carter's administration on the pretext that the aircraft which Saudi Arabia received constitute a menace to the security and safety of Israel because of their long range, which enables them to take off from their bases in Saudi territory to bomb the heart of Israel.

Nevertheless, the Israeli and Zionist tricks have not kept Saudi Arabia from receiving this powerful weapon. The Saudi government, in its private contacts with U.S. officials, had hinted that, in case the transaction should be withheld from it or canceled, it would be obliged to seek another source, perhaps France, to supply it with comparable aircraft.

Saudi Arabia has received small quantities of these aircraft regularly, and several groups of Saudi pilots have been receiving training to fly them at the same time. The training of these pilots takes a long time because of the complexities of the weapon and the necessity of extremely long and rigorous training on it.

#### Air Defense Nets

Saudi Arabia now intends to set up air defense nets equipped with the most advanced electronic observation devices and surface-to-air missiles. Saudi Arabia possesses more than 500 Maverick air-to-ground rockets, 10 Hawk surface-to-air rocket batteries, and a number of French CHARINE rockets, which are a developed version of the Crotale rocket.

For the purpose of completing the defense plan and insuring the necessary defense of the far-flung frontiers of the kingdom, the construction of military bases and camps is in progress. The sites for them have been selected with care to answer the necessary requirements in emergency situations. The kingdom is allotting extensive sums for this purpose from its revenues. The expenditures on the construction of the said military installations amounted to 16 billion dollars at one time.

Directing attention to the air and ground arms does not mean neglecting the building of the naval force, although this force is still small in consideration of the length of the seacoast of the kingdom and in comparison with the fleets of other countries.

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There are no official statistics showing the number of the ground forces, although estimates range from 50,000 to 60,000 men and officers, who have received excellent military training. Among these forces, there are two armored brigades and two parachute battalions, in addition to the Royal Guard battalion.

To encourage Saudis to rally around the banner of the service of their country, high salaries are offered to military personnel, and Prince Sultan Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, minister of defense and aviation, looks after his officers with special concern and affection. The officers of the Saudi air force receive high-grade training courses abroad, especially in the U.S., in view of the fact that most of the Saudi weaponry is made there.

#### The White Guard

In addition to the regular armed forces, to whose training and expansion full attention has been devoted since 1978, there are the forces of the national guard, or the White Guard, which is commanded by Prince 'Abdallah Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy chairman of the cabinet.

The number of these forces is estimated at 20,000 to 30,000 officers and men, and it is possible to increase their number to 40,000, if need be, by calling up those whose period of training has ended, and who are members of the desert tribes which live in the highlands of the Nejd, the ancestral home of the Saudi ruling family and the object of its pride and glory in its pure Arab origins.

Although the national guard is a small, swiftly-moving force, which is equipped with weapons to meet the requirements of domestic security, nevertheless it can be used at the most distant frontiers in defense of the nation at need.

At the same time when the regular armed forces were being developed, the national guard forces were also being developed and equipped with modern weapons. They have been recently supplied with radio and telegraph equipment at a cost of 1.3 billion dollars, and their command has become capable of making contact with its units and directing them in any area of the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia has ambitious defense and military programs. It hopes to increase the size of its regular forces to 300,000 men and that of the national guard to 75,000 men by 1985. The military maneuvers which took place at Khamis Mushayt base near the Yemen border last July showed that the regular troops were capable and prepared to enter into combat with live ammunition in desert conditions of extreme harshness.

The authorities concerned in Saudi Arabia say that the country, which is building its armed forces with the utmost swiftness, is directing its

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attention to the modernization and development which is in progress in the area of the Arab Gulf, and is highly desirous of playing, in cooperation with its sister Arab states, especially the Gulf states, the defense role which appropriate to its economic and political position.

#### The Saudi Defense Role

Contrary to the stories and official U.S. newspaper accounts, the Saudi authorities have not been beset by any consternation over the security of the Gulf area, including that of Saudi Arabia, since the collapse of the regime of the shah of Iran, who set himself up as a policeman for the Gulf. Instead, Saudi Arabia had become exasperated to the extreme with this role, which provoked Arabian and Islamic feelings.

Consequently, the Saudi authorities feel that the security and defense of Saudi Arabia are first and last the responsibility of Saudi Arabia, including the protection of its petroleum fields and wells.

These authorities entertain no doubt that the day when Saudi Arabia will be fully and completely confident of the ability of its forces to insure a full cover for its skies and its land is very near at hand.

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NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

RESUMPTION OF MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN RELATIONS POSSIBLE

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 31 Aug 79 p 2384

[Article: "Denunciation of Defense Treaties With Morocco"]

[Text] Mauritania's desire to observe a "strict neutrality" in the Western Sahara conflict was reaffirmed by its minister of foreign affairs, M. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah in Dakar at a press conference held on August 21. Mauritania, he stressed, "is not a participant (in the Saharan conflict) and demands respect for its territorial integrity and its strict neutrality." It "would not be able to accept any attempt at destabilization without reacting," M. Abdallah went on to say.

Further, the CMSN (Military Committee for National Salvation) recommended that the government denounce the defense treaties signed with Morocco in May 1977. The CMSN, consisting of 27 members, is the governing body of Mauritania, and since the government is bound to carry out its instructions, the denunciation must be considered official. Nevertheless, one cannot rule out the fact that the primary motive of the defense treaty's denunciation was to respond to King Hassan's declarations at his Fes press conference and, according to indications in Nouakchott government circles, Mauritania would consider that it had therefore expressed its discontent sufficiently and that a resumption of negotiations with Rabat would be possible.

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NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

EDITORIAL DENOUNCES MOROCCAN POWER PLAY IN TIRIS EL-GHARBIA

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 20 Aug - 17 Sep 79 p 31

[Editorial by Hassen Zenati: "Rabat: The New Armed Attack"]

[Text] The occupation by the Moroccan forces of aggression of Dakhla, the capital of the Tiris El-Gharbia region, which Nouakchott had decided to give back to the POLISARIO, according to the terms of the peace treaty signed in Algiers, took place after the first article of our correspondent in Algiers, Hassan Zenati, had been published (see p 14). Here is his second article, which arrived 2 days ago. It completes his analysis.

Blackmail, provocation, occupation... Just as in 1975, on the eve of the signing of the Madrid agreement, the same cycle is beginning again in the Western Sahara. After having thrown out the Mauritanian governor of the city, the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) raised the Moroccan flag in Dakhla, the capital of Tiris el-Gharbia, which had practically been given back to the POLISARIO by the peace agreements of 5 August 1979. A new attack, then, carried out under the protection of a thick smoke screen which consisted of a "right of preemption" which Morocco would like to see prevail and of the "continuation of the kingdom." Paying no attention to the appeal of the POLISARIO that it join "the irresistible march toward peace," Hassan II thus chose the path of war and military adventures. It was foreseeable that he would do "something" to save face after so many snubs received since the lamentable testimony of his diplomats before the Security Council of the UN, going so far as his condemnation without appeal by the OAU [Organization of African Unity] in Monrovia and including his poor showing before Chadli Bendjedid, whom he had rashly "challenged" concerning a case he had always considered "closed..." "Something," that is, as usual, rushing ahead, taking another step on the way to military adventures.

Insidiously, Rabat let it be known that the illegal occupation and pure and simple annexation of Dakhla is the result of a bargain struck with Mauritanian Prime Minister Mohammed Ould Haidallah, who was subjected, on 11 August, to outright blackmail, which recalls the black days of Nazi Germany and of Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss: Nouakchott was to close its eyes to the

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occupation of Tiris el-Gharbia and Hassan II would put a gag on Col Ould Abdelkader ("Kader"), the promoter of a dubious "committee of free officers" against what he calls the "Mauritian capitulation before the POLISARIO. If that were the case, it would be, in this instance, a new bargain of dupes. For "Kader," who just barely escaped capture by the POLISARIO in 1977, having been evacuated at the last minute by the Moroccan secret services so that he would not have to face justice in his own country, which wanted to prosecute him for corruption, does not have much influence in the Moroccan army. In power for 14 months, the Moroccan army is actually "firmly decided to definitively get out of this unjust war," to use the words of its leaders.

Whatever the case, for the moment, in this small mishap, two remarks can now be made on the complicity from which Hassan II has been able, or might be able, to benefit in this new fait accompli.

1. There is no doubt that certain French circles must find it difficult to hide their satisfaction; we know, actually, that French specialists in dirty tricks had already last February and March strongly advised Mustapha Ould Saleck to get out of the war by handing over Tiris el-Gharbia to his Moroccan ally. They had then been sent packing, since the Mauritian leader refused to accept this "peace" with dishonor. A few weeks later, he was stripped of all his powers. Right after this attack, these same specialists would be tempted to suggest negotiations on a mini Saharan state, or a Saharo-Mauritian state, having given up trying to cut up the present Mauritania in order to turn over the northern bank of the Senagal River to his very interested neighbor. Just as in Chad, France has more than one iron in the fire in this business. In any case, it would be good for Paris to show itself without further delay, rather than keeping silent, which in the long run can only be interpreted as complicity.

2. The complicity of the United States in this new poker game of the king is more obvious. A few months ago, already, we were pointing out Washington's new interest in the Western Sahara, which coincided with the resounding attacks of the POLISARIO against Tan Tan, Assa, etc. Since then, another step has been taken to help Hassan II: the establishment of an airlift for the repatriation of 1500 troops of the FAR from Shaba, the supplying of new weapons, along with the possibility of using them beyond international frontiers recognized by Morocco... The Moroccan lobby, which has close contacts with the lobbies of the shah and of the prozionists in Washington, are said to have succeeded in having Moroccan aggression accepted against the threat of the overthrow of the monarchy and imaginary "Communist and Khomeyni" dangers in Morocco. He who wants to drown his dog claims he has rabies...

And now? As in 1975, the cycle is not closed, for all that. After the occupation comes the resistance. That is the sensitive spot for all those who continue to believe (or pretend to) and act as if the Saharoui people did not exist.

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evertheless, the evidence of their existence is too blinding and too deadly to their enemies for them to be treated lightly. "In 1979, as in 1975," a POLISARIO militant told me in all seriousness, "the struggle to impose independence, the return, peace, stability in our region, continues." And the recent offensive of the POLISARIO which inflicted heavy losses on the Moroccan troops have shown that the Saharouis are more determined than ever not to permit the monarch in Rabat to have a good night's sleep.

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ISRAEL

QUARTERLY REVIEWS ARAB EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM QUARTERLY in English No 12, Summer 79 pp 112-122

[Article by Michael Winter of Tel-Aviv University]

[Text]

When Israel achieved independence in 1948, it already possessed a well-developed educational system which had grown up over decades. Arab education, however, had functioned minimally under the British Mandate, and with the War of Independence and the departure of many Arab intellectuals and teachers, the system fell into disarray. We shall review here how Israel established a system of Arab education, and how it compares to the national picture as a whole, as well as that of the Arab countries in general.

Israel's Arab population in 1948 was overwhelmingly rural. Primary schools could be found only in some of the larger villages, and high schools were few and far between. Institutions of higher education were non-existent. During the British mandatory period higher education was the domain of a privileged élite, who were sent to study abroad. In Israel today primary education is universal, with almost total enforcement of the Compulsory Education Act in the Arab sector. There are kindergartens and primary schools up to grade eight in even the smallest villages, including bedouin encampments. A widespread network of academic, vocational, and agricultural high schools has been developed. The 'reform' which was introduced into the educational system in 1968 whereby 'middle schools' (junior high schools) were set up and teachers trained for these classes applied equally to the Arab sector. Increasing numbers of graduates of Arab high schools with matriculation certificates continue their studies in Israel's institutions of higher learning. An Arab with a second academic degree is no longer a rarity on the Israeli scene. There are Arabs teaching at Israeli universities today who graduated from Israeli

• M. Winter teaches Islamic history at Tel-Aviv University.

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universities and were sent abroad by them for further study. The Arab population in general, largely illiterate in 1948, now possesses a higher degree of literacy than prevails in most, if not all, Arab countries today.

It is valid to compare the Arab to the Jewish educational situation in Israel since they both share the same privileges and services, including education. At the same time there are a number of factors which must be taken into account when making such a comparison. In the first place, the two communities did not share the same starting point. The newborn State of Israel had to build an Arab educational system from scratch, while Hebrew education was well under way. This development must be viewed against a background in which we find a Jewish population with a high degree of modernization and a tradition of literacy, together with an Arab population which was largely rural and traditionally placed little value on education.

The natural increase of the Arab population in Israel is the highest in the world and far surpasses that of the Jewish population.<sup>1</sup> This makes it much more difficult for government and local authorities to meet growing demands for more schools, teachers and facilities. Education was not traditionally regarded in Arab society as an integral part of the life of the community, in which the involvement of the citizen is both natural and desirable, but was seen rather as a service provided by the government for the passive acceptance of its citizens. This view is expressed in the attitude of the Arab population towards education in general, and in their limited readiness to invest time, money and effort in it. However, Arab society is undergoing rapid change and modernization, and this is discernible also in changing attitudes to education.

Although Israel's Arabs were completely cut off from the rest of the Arab world from 1948 up to the Six Day War (and even after 1967 these contacts have not been direct), there is no doubt that from a social, cultural and religious point of view they are an integral part of the Arab world. Thus it is natural to compare the educational attainments of the Israeli Arabs with those of their counterparts in the Arab world, and especially in the Administered Territories which came under Israel's jurisdiction in 1967. The general picture of Arab education in Israel is far better than that in the Arab world as a whole. But this does not apply to the field of higher education, where their achievements are less impressive than those of important sections of the Arab world, including the Administered Territories and Arab states bordering Israel. It is at

<sup>1</sup> Out of 595,000 non-Jewish persons living in Israel by the end of 1978, 579,000 were Arab. They constituted between one-sixth and one-seventh of the total population of Israel, which numbered 3,730,000 persons. While the rate of growth of the Jewish population in 1978 (including immigration) was 1.9 per cent, natural increase in the Arab sector was 3.3 per cent (as against an average national growth rate of 2.1 per cent for 1978). (See the daily *ha-Aretz* of January 3, 1979.)

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this stage that their minority position is reflected. On the one hand, the educational attainments of many minorities are a well documented phenomenon - and this applies to the Israeli Arabs as well, despite the fact that they are a minority in a society which has reached a higher stage of development than they have. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the very situation of the Israeli Arabs as a national and cultural minority hinders them in obtaining higher education. A high school pupil in the Administered Territories may continue his studies in an Arab state (or in the territories themselves) without having to overcome the difficulties of social, cultural and language adjustments faced by the graduate of an Arab high school in Israel entering an Israeli institution of higher learning. The chances of the Arab university graduate in Israel of achieving professional integration seem less promising than the chances of a university graduate from the West Bank or Gaza of finding work in the Arab states, especially in the oil sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf.

*Primary Education*

The most important educational achievement of Israel's Arabs is in the field of pre-school and primary school education. No other Arab society apart from Israel starts compulsory education in kindergarten, at the age of five. The Arab kindergarten is usually attached to the primary school. In Israel's early years, the implementation of the Compulsory Education Act among the Arabs met with either passive opposition or apathy. Many parents refused to send their children, especially their daughters, to school, whether because they needed their help at home or in the fields, or for fear of what might happen to the girls outside their homes, or simply because they did not grasp the importance of education. Dropping out was a frequent phenomenon, and girls especially were often taken out of school when they reached adolescence. The policy adopted by the education authorities was usually one of persuasion rather than blanket enforcement of the Compulsory Education law. In the first years of the state it was even accepted procedure to close the schools during the most demanding agricultural seasons in order to enable the children to work on their parents' farms without falling behind in their studies. The percentage of girl pupils in the Arab school system rose steadily. In 1959/60 only 36.8 per cent of primary school pupils were girls, whereas in 1973/74 they accounted for 45.7 per cent. This increase stemmed from a number of measures taken by the Ministry of Education and Culture: the opening of separate primary schools for girls wherever the demand existed - which was in the great majority of Arab population centres; providing them with women teachers wherever possible; and the inclusion



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of pre-vocational training for girls (sewing, cooking) in school curricula in order to increase their motivation to attend school.

More important, however, than incentive and persuasion from above was developing awareness of the importance of education among the Arab population itself. Not only has there been no recurrence of the famous incident during the first years of the state when a bedouin sheikh used school furniture to fuel his stove, but the most remote villages and bedouin encampments are now demanding local schooling of a high standard for their children. The expectations of the villagers regarding the development of local educational facilities sometimes outstrip not only available means, but also objective needs.

The implementation of the Compulsory Education Act, while not yet complete, has made great strides forward. In 1973 the rate of implementation of the law in the Arab population was 90.7 per cent, as opposed to 98.6 per cent of the Jewish population, i.e., a gap of only eight per cent, and this gap too is narrowing steadily.<sup>2</sup> There is no Arab state which can point to similar success in the implementation of compulsory education. It must be remembered, of course, that the above statistics are based on national averages: school attendance is higher in the towns than in the villages and bedouin encampments, among boys than girls, and among Christian Arabs than among Muslims and Druze.

The Compulsory Education Act has had a revolutionary effect in raising the educational level of the Arab population of Israel. According to the population census of 1961, almost one half (49.5 per cent) of the Arabs of Israel aged fourteen or over (i.e., above the compulsory education age) had received no education whatsoever (zero years of education). And even the 1961 census reflected a great advance on Israel's first years. In the 1974 census those who had received no education whatsoever were less than one quarter (24.4 per cent), i.e., the percentage had been cut by half. The rate of literacy of the Arab population above the age of fourteen rose from 48.3 per cent in 1961 to 63.5 per cent in 1972, an improvement of 15.2 per cent; in the Jewish population during the same period the rate of literacy rose by only 2.9 per cent - from 87.9 per cent to 90.8 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

For purposes of comparison we may note that the rate of illiteracy in Egypt is close to seventy per cent. The percentage of literate Arabs in Israel is similar to that in Jordan, where compulsory education has been more successfully enforced than in any other Arab country.

<sup>2</sup> Sami Mar'i and Nabia Daher, *Facts and Trends in the Development of Arab Education in Israel* (Hebrew), School of Education, Institute for Research and Development of Arab Education, Haifa University, 1976, p. 51

<sup>3</sup> *Israel Statistical Year Book, 1975* (Hebrew), Central Bureau of Statistics, pp. 299, 601.

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*Secondary Education*

The development of the secondary school system has also been impressive. From fourteen (sic) secondary-school pupils in 1948/9 the number of pupils in Arab high schools in 1974/5 reached 15,119. The most significant rise came in the seventies, when the number of pupils attending Arab high schools will be doubled. Hundreds of Arab pupils attending Hebrew academic, vocational and agricultural high schools must also be added to the above numbers.<sup>4</sup> The number of institutions of secondary education in the Arab sector rose from one in 1948/9 to thirty-five in 1959/60 and to ninety-seven in 1974/5. There were sixty-one teaching posts in Arab secondary education in 1959/60, 286 in 1969/70 and 1,145 in 1974/5.

Despite the impressive quantitative achievements represented by the above figures, there is no doubt that the gravest problems facing Arab education in Israel are in the field of secondary education. The system suffers from flaws in its structure, administration and educational standards. While objective conditions are partially responsible for these flaws, they are also due in some measure to the form of ownership of secondary education in Israel. Unlike the Arab states, the secondary school system in Israel is not state owned. While the primary school system is run by the state through the Ministry of Education and Culture, secondary schools are in the hands of non-governmental agencies, which are not always capable, in the present state of affairs in the Arab community, of shouldering such a burden. The Arab secondary school system is administered by municipalities, local councils, and parochial bodies. These agencies are frequently lacking in the know-how and administrative stability needed to sustain a creditable educational system. While the village school is a source of pride to the local inhabitants, it is only too often the victim of political and clan power-struggles. The parochial schools too, which play an important part in the secondary school system (far greater than in the primary schools) often suffer from an even greater lack of competent staff than the municipal schools. The parochial schools are generally regarded as being on a lower level than the other Arab high schools, although there are a number of important exceptions to this rule. Although the above schools receive supervision and financial assistance, this cannot compensate for their administrative weaknesses.

The main flaw in Israel's Arab secondary school system lies in the discrepancy between academic and vocational education. In

<sup>4</sup> A municipal high school in Haifa has been conducting a unique experiment in the integration of Arab pupils in a Jewish educational institution since the beginning of the sixties. The Arabs study in separate classes, according to the Arab syllabus, but socially they are an integral part of the Jewish school.

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many countries, including the Arab states and Israel, the emphasis has shifted from academic to vocational education, causing a decrease in academic high school enrolment. The construction and maintenance of a vocational high school is far more complicated and expensive than that of an academic one. Some of the vocational schools in the Arab community are owned jointly by the municipality or local council and the ORT or Amal organizations, which maintain a large network of Jewish vocational schools. The agricultural school in Râma is state-owned. Most of the vocational schools are housed in modern buildings and furnished with up-to-date equipment. The graduates of vocational schools have no difficulty in being absorbed in the labour market and are far better off in this regard than the graduates of the academic high schools. Nevertheless, the prestige and standards of the vocational schools in the Arab sector are lower than those of the academic schools, and a vocational school which does not prepare its pupils for matriculation is considered inferior. Although a survey conducted by Haifa University found 'a clear preference for technical over white-collar occupations' in the Arab sector, the same survey also found that 'the acquisition of a trade takes second place (after higher education) as a factor in the improvement of socio-economic status.'<sup>3</sup> In other words, a general education which does not lead to higher education is considered inferior to vocational education which does not lead to higher education, but the aspiration (in many cases unrealistic) to higher education and the status that goes with it is strong enough to send most of the pupils (and all the good ones) to academic rather than vocational high schools.

This situation persisted at the time of the survey despite the fact that all Arab pupils attending vocational schools were eligible for reductions in tuition fees based on the size and economic circumstances of the family - an important incentive if we take into account the fact that in the conditions prevailing in the Arab sector this meant virtually free high school education - whereas in the case of academic high schools only those pupils who passed special aptitude tests were eligible for these reductions and the rest had to pay full fees. While the findings of the above survey regarding the *attitudes* of the Arabs towards vocational education appear to be reliable, their *actual behaviour*, for whatever reason, does not appear to be an accurate reflection of these attitudes.

Without ignoring the differences between Arab society in Israel and those of Egypt and other Arab states, it is worth noting that in Egypt too, if it were left to the free choice of parents and children, without the direct government intervention which limits the

<sup>3</sup> Sami Mar'i and Avraham Benyamini, *The Attitude of Arab Society in Israel towards Technological-Vocational Education* (Hebrew), School of Education, Institute for Research and Development of Arab Education, Haifa University, 1975, p. 20.

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numbers of pupils eligible for academic high school education, the majority would opt for non-vocational education, without taking practical considerations into account. It is interesting to note that although the Egyptian authorities have succeeded in directing most of the high school population to vocational schools, they too have had only limited success in raising the prestige and standard of vocational education.

Vocational training may yet come into its own among Israel's Arabs. The foundation exists, and with more variety in the range of subjects offered, the extension of two-year to three-year courses, etc., there is good reason to expect progress in this field.

For many years Arab secondary education suffered from a chronic shortage of qualified teachers, especially in mathematics, science and English, as well as a shortage of textbooks. Towards the end of the sixties, however, the textbook problem was solved, and suitable material was prepared in all subjects and at every level. Most academic high school students choose humanistic subjects, and only a minority choose the mathematics-physics stream. Here there is a shortage of teachers, and those there are hold more than one teaching post - with all the negative effects this implies for the standard of their teaching. Mar'i and Daher have rightly suggested that with the increase in the number of Arab university graduates, and perhaps, too, with the rise in the academic standards of these students, an attempt should be made to limit Arab high school teachers to one teaching post, in order both to raise the standard of teaching and to allow university graduates to be absorbed in the profession.<sup>6</sup>

*The Parochial Schools*

An important role in Arab secondary education is played by the Christian parochial schools, popularly (although inaccurately) known as 'missionary' schools.<sup>7</sup> Primary and secondary schools are often run jointly under one roof. Many of these institutions are affiliated with a church organization based abroad. In such cases, the formal directorship of the institution is in the hands of a foreign priest or nun, French or Italian as the case may be, but the actual running of the school is entrusted to a local Arab principal or vice-principal. Most of these schools are Catholic (the Greek Catholic Seminary in Nazareth, the Terra Sancta schools in Acre and Nazareth, the Franciscan convent school for girls, etc.), but there

<sup>6</sup> Mar'i-Daher, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> The parochial schools operating in the Arab sector are not attended by Jewish pupils, and they are not to be confused with the missionary schools which operate in the Jewish sector and which are not, of course, under the supervision of the Education Ministry. Christian missionaries are not and could not have been active among the Muslim population, and the only missionary activity possible among the Arab population is inter-denominational, e.g., Protestant missionary activity among the Catholics or Greek Orthodox.

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are also Protestant schools, and a Greek Orthodox school in Haifa. While the majority of the parochial schools are academic, there are also a few vocational schools for both boys and girls. The parochial schools have played and continue to play an important part in vocational education (e.g., the Silesian Don Bosko school in Nazareth) and in the education of girls (e.g., the Franciscan convent school, St. Joseph's, etc.).

The parochial schools are accredited high schools. Although the atmosphere differs slightly from that in the municipal schools - with greater emphasis on discipline, uniforms, religious instruction for the Christian pupils, etc. - these schools follow the general syllabus and accept pupils and teachers from all denominations. Even the Greek Catholic boys' school in Nazareth, which is still classified as parochial and was originally intended to prepare candidates for the priesthood, has long been transformed into a regular high school despite its clerical administration.

The parochial primary schools are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Culture which grants them financial assistance according to their size. At the secondary level their status is no different from that of the more numerous public high schools run by the municipalities or local councils.

Official policy towards the parochial schools has always been extremely liberal, in striking contrast to the situation in the Arab states. If private parochial schools are allowed at all in the Arab countries,<sup>8</sup> they are generally subjected to a variety of restrictions: the school principal, and sometimes the teachers too, must be citizens of the host state, and 'national' subjects - Arabic, civics, history, etc. - must be taught by a citizen of the state in the official language of the state. The schools are strictly supervised. In Israel, government supervision has never been imposed on Arab parochial schools (this holds true for the parochial schools in East Jerusalem, too). On the contrary, requests for supervision from the Ministry of Education and Culture came from the schools themselves, which had to prove that they met the requirements of the Ministry as regards their curricula, textbooks, staff qualifications, equipment, laboratories and buildings. On condition that the school met these requirements it received supervision from the Ministry as well as its participation in tuition fee reductions, and its pupils were entitled to sit for the matriculation examinations. The majority of the parochial schools are today under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

The schools in East Jerusalem are a special case. With the unification of Jerusalem in 1967 a combined Jordanian-Israeli syllabus was prepared for these schools, in order to provide students with the option of sitting for either Jordanian or Israeli matriculation examinations. It soon became clear that despite the

<sup>8</sup> In Egypt, for example, foreign schools were closed down after the Suez War in 1956.

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legal and political status of the city, the Arab inhabitants continued to belong both socially and technically (most opted to remain Jordanian citizens) to the West Bank rather than to Israel, and saw their education as connected with the West Bank and the Arab world. East Jerusalem high-school graduates want to continue their studies in the Arab states and not in Israel. Consequently, it has recently been decided to transfer the East Jerusalem schools to the West Bank (i.e. the Jordanian) syllabus, although instruction in Hebrew will continue to be provided.

*Teachers*

A great deal has been accomplished over the past three decades in training teachers for all stages of Arab education in Israel. At first there were hardly any teachers in the Arab sector. Two measures were adopted to remedy this situation. Firstly, young Arabs with any educational qualifications were appointed to teaching posts, while at the same time steps were taken to ensure their professional advancement. This is a method which has been adopted in many educational systems suffering from a lack of professional manpower. Secondly, Jewish teachers who had immigrated from Arab countries (mainly Iraq) with the establishment of the state, were appointed to teaching posts in Arab schools. These were qualified teachers who could not be absorbed in the Hebrew school system because of language problems, but whose knowledge of Arabic made them natural candidates for teaching posts in the Arab sector. Gradually many of these teachers were integrated into the Hebrew school system or found other jobs, while others remained permanently in the field of Arab education in teaching, administrative or supervisory capacities.

Apart from these emergency measures, teachers in the Arab schools are, of course, trained in teachers training colleges. In 1956 a college for Arab primary and kindergarten teachers was established in Jaffa. Today there are two institutions for training Arab teachers in Israel - one in Haifa and one in the centre of the country near Netanya. Special courses for teachers intended for the bedouin schools in the Negev have also been opened in the teachers training college in Beersheva. In 1948/9 there were 121 Arabs at teachers training colleges, in 1959/60 there were 370, and in 1974/5 there were 723. Courses and examinations are also given outside these frameworks to enable working teachers to qualify.

- Teachers for the junior high school and secondary schools require academic qualifications which they obtain at various universities. Arab students of education are eligible for government grants and for loans which are converted to grants on condition that the recipient accept a teaching post stipulated by the Ministry on completing his studies. The Arab teachers belong to the general teachers union, but have a special department to promote their

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specific interests. They also produce an Arab-language publication - *Şadā al-Turbiya*.

*Curricula and Educational Aims*

No picture of Arab education in Israel would be complete without taking into account its content and aims, and the problems peculiar to the Arab schools. Their curriculum is based on the principle that the material taught in the Arab schools must be equal in quantity and quality to that taught in the Hebrew schools. The same standards apply to both Jewish and Arab pupils sitting for examinations. In the matriculation examinations, papers set in such subjects as geography, the natural sciences, and mathematics, are simply translated from the original Hebrew into Arabic for the Arab candidates. The same means are also applied: streaming, modern methods of English instruction, and the junior high school system have all been introduced into the Arab schools.<sup>9</sup>

Arabic, as the mother tongue of the Arab pupils and the language of their culture, and also as one of the official languages of the State of Israel, is the first language, and the language of instruction, in the Arab schools. Arab pupils learn Hebrew from the fourth grade. The question of the correct relation between Hebrew and Arabic in the Arab school has aroused discussion and controversy. On the one hand, the Arab pupil has the right to be educated in his own language, culture and tradition, and on the other, he must be sufficiently fluent in Hebrew to understand the culture of the State of Israel, which is a Hebrew-Jewish culture, and the problems of the Jewish people - although he is not expected to have as intimate knowledge of these matters as his Jewish counterpart. An adequate mastery of Hebrew is also necessary for the Arab citizen's integration into the economic life of the country, his absorption in the labour market on leaving school, or the continuation of his studies at an Israeli institution of higher learning.

The Hebrew literature syllabus, too, has been the subject of some debate. For example, the requirement to study passages from the Old Testament as a source of understanding the Hebrew language and Jewish culture has provoked complaints that Arab pupils were being forced to study the Jewish religion. The suitability in general of the Hebrew literature taught in Arab schools has been questioned, it being argued that while the syllabus should be representative, it should not dwell too closely on subjects of specifically Jewish interest, which are difficult for the Arab pupil to understand or identify with. One guideline that has emerged from this controversy is that modern Israeli literature should be

<sup>9</sup> The 'reform' was applied to the Arab sector in 1970, when four junior high schools were opened. In 1975/6 there were thirty-three junior high schools operating with about nine thousand pupils. In the same year there were one hundred seventy-six junior high schools in the Jewish sector.

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dominant in the material taught in the Arab sector, while material dealing with Jewish life in the Diaspora is as a rule unsuitable for teaching in the Arab schools.

The study of English raised a practical, rather than ideological problem. The burden of a second foreign language in addition to Hebrew was felt to be excessive,<sup>10</sup> and a special English programme was accordingly worked out for the Arab high schools in the early sixties. Arab matriculation candidates may now sit for their examinations in English according to the special programme or the general one, as determined by the school.

General history is taught at the same level in both Jewish and Arab schools. But in the Arab schools the emphasis is shifted from Jewish history to the history of the Arabs and Islam. In civics the Arab pupil studies the structure of the state and its institutions, but not recent Jewish history and the history of Zionism, which form part of the civics syllabus in the Hebrew school system. The history of Zionism, in a condensed form, is taught as part of the history syllabus in the Arab schools.

There are three alternative programmes of religious instruction in the Arab sector - Islamic religion, Christian religion, and the Druze heritage.<sup>11</sup> In the primary schools a certain number of hours are allocated to religious instruction. In high schools religion is offered as an elective subject, but it is not compulsory. The Christian parochial schools give religious instruction, from which the non-Christian pupils are exempt. Schools in entirely Muslim areas (the Triangle, at the centre of the country) generally give instruction in Islam. Academic high schools in mixed areas do not provide religious instruction.

Finally, the most fundamental question of all arises, concerning the aims of education for Arabs in Israel. Obviously, the educational system cannot be separated from the political, cultural and social systems. The sensitive situation of Israel's Arabs as a minority living in a country which is in a state of constant confrontation with the Arab world must inevitably be expressed in the educational system. The fact that the Arabs have a religion, a culture, a language and a history which differ from those of the Jewish population cannot be ignored. The Arab teacher cannot be expected to educate his pupils in the spirit of Zionism and the national aspirations of the Jewish people. At the same time, it is understood that he must educate them to be loyal citizens of the state, to obey its laws, and to take pride in its development and achievements in general and in those of the Arab community in particular.

<sup>10</sup> The study of classical Arabic, which differs considerably from spoken Arabic, poses an additional problem for the Arab pupil, and there are some who argue that it should be taught almost as a foreign language.

<sup>11</sup> The Druze religion itself is not, of course, taught in school due to its esoteric nature and the fact that its secrets are not disclosed even to all the members of the sect itself.

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MAURITANIA

CENTRAL BANK OF MAURITANIA REPORT ON ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 17 Aug 79 pp 2270, 2271

[Article: "Recent Factors In Mauritanian Economic Outlook"]

[Text] The Central Bank of Mauritania recently released its latest report on economic indicators (May 1979).

Foreign trade represented, in millions of ouguiyas:

	1st trimester 1978	1st trimester 1979	April 1979
Imports CAF	2,271.4	2,289.5	845.3
Exports FOB	1,894.4	1,696.7	419.5

For imports during the first 3-month period of 1979, consumer goods accounted for 50 percent (especially foodstuffs) and motor fuel comprised 21 percent of the total. France remained in first place among the suppliers.

Exports for the same 3-month period included iron ore: 23 million tons (up 0.9 tons over the first 3 months of 1978) at a cost of 1.4 billion ouguiyas (up 0.5 billion); and fish, at a cost of 0.3 billion ouguiyas (down 0.1 billion). Copper ore exports ended in mid-1978. As in 1978, France was the main purchaser of Mauritanian iron ore (741,000 tons), followed by Belgium (435,000 tons), Italy (354,000 tons), Spain (204,000 tons), England (197,000 tons), West Germany (166,000 tons), and Japan (126,000 tons). For the first 3 months of 1979, fish was exported to Japan (76 percent), Spain (12 percent) and Italy (11 percent).

During the first 3 months of 1979, iron ore mining reached a greater level with 2.1 million tons, compared to 1.6 million tons for the same 3-month period in 1979. April 1979 production had as its object 0.8 million tons, and by the end of April stocks had reached 1 million tons.

In all, 22,000 tons of fish were unloaded at Nouadhibou during the first 3 months of 1979 (compared to 16,500 tons in 1978), and 4,600 tons were brought ashore in April.

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At the end of April 1979, the six most important public works projects of Nouakchott took up 2.1 billion ouguiyas, from which 0.6 billion ouguiyas for works remained to be implemented.

During the first 3 months of 1979, the port of Nouadhibou recorded a trade of 8,600 tons of imported merchandise (not including fish), and 8,300 tons of exports. During the same period, the wharf of Nouakchott handled 53,700 tons of imported merchandise.

Purchases of oil products in the first 4 months of 1979 comprised 198 million ouguiyas (710 million for all of 1978).

With regard to domestic trade, the state company, Sominex's (National Import-Export Company) sales of major necessities (sugar, tea and rice) showed a marked progression during the first 2 months of 1979: 0.9 billion ouguiyas.

Over a base figure of 100 in January 1975, the general price indicator of consumption for a European-type family increased to 151 by the end of April 1979 (up 10 percent over the end of March 1978).

By March 31, 1979, currency and notes in circulation totalled 2 billion ouguiyas (up 10 percent over the end of March 1978). The total number of bank deposits reached 3.5 billion ouguiyas (up 0.1 billion over the end of March 1978), credit to public organizations accounted for 0.6 billion at the end of March 1979 (down 0.2 billion).

Likewise at the end of March 1979, the Central Bank of Mauritania held a credit of 2 billion ouguiyas in terms of authorized advances (compared to 1.8 billion at the end of March 1979).

The incurrence of economy credits as a result of the banks' offers totalled 8 billion ouguiyas at the end of March 1979 (up 0.8 billion over the end of March 1978).

The incurrence of economy credits as a result of the banks' offers totalled 8 billion ouguiyas at the end of March 1979 (up 0.8 billion over the end of March 1978). Furthermore, the banks' consolidated position takes into account 0.5 billion ouguiyas in credits which are questionable or involved in lawsuits. For amounts of credit allowances used, trade is in first place (2.7 billion ouguiyas), with mining in second place (1.4 billion).

Mauritania's indebtedness abroad has worsened: 3.4 billion ouguiyas at the end of March 1979, compared to 3 billion a year before.

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MOROCCO

PRIME MINISTER DISCUSSES SAHARA-RELATED TOPICS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 24-30 Aug 79 pp 28-29

[Interview with Foreign Minister M'Hamed Boucetta, Conducted by Faruq Abu-Zahr]

[Text] Morocco's Foreign Minister M'Hamed Boucetta is also secretary general of the Istiqlal Party, the number-two political force participating in the government. It is the party founded by the late national leader 'Allal al-Fasi, and it played its major historic role in resisting French colonialism.

M'Hamed Boucetta is known for his vehement, patriotic stand on the Sahara issue. He has called for arming the citizens in the regions along the Algerian and Mauritanian borders, and has also called for mobilization in order to meet future eventualities.

A correspondent from AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with the Moroccan minister on his return from a surprise visit to Nouakchott, where he held negotiations with Mauritanian officials.

I began my interview by asking the Moroccan diplomatic chief, "Some observers feel that the coup which ousted Mauritanian President Mokhtar Ould Daddah in July 1978 augured the stand which the present regime adopted on 5 August 1979, which culminated in the signing of the agreement with Polisario for giving up Tiris El-Gharbia. Do you believe that this is the correct analysis?

[Answer] We expressed our stand at that time. Our view was that what happened in Mauritania last year, in particular on 10 July 1978, was an internal Mauritanian issue. But it soon became clear to us, from the stands taken by Mauritanian officials, that this line augured a changed with respect to the Saharan issue, which became apparent from the statements made by the officials in Nouakchott all last year in spite of the relations and treaties linking Mauritania and Morocco.

Other parties interfered in the matter, one of them the so-called Polisario front, which began exerting strong pressure on the members of the Military Committee for National Salvation in Mauritania.

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M'Hamed Boucetta was silent for a moment, and then resumed speaking sadly. "Recent Mauritanian statements made during the OAU conference in Monrovia conflict with the spirit of firm relations with Morocco. Mauritania voted for and abided by the recommendations presented by the arbitration committee. This became more obvious, and perhaps in a questionable manner, when the so-called Algiers Agreement was signed with the Polisario. We feel that there is no basis to it, neither from the legal nor the international standpoints, and not even from the standpoint of its coinciding with the real factors of the region, because it doesn't take into consideration the clauses of the treaty concluded between Morocco and Mauritania."

[Question] What were Mauritania's motives for signing the Algiers agreement on 5 August?

[Answer] Mauritania says that it is working for peace and to finish with this issue. We don't dispute this, but there is another way of evading responsibility. We have told our Mauritanian brothers plainly that the important thing is for the relations between our two countries to remain on such a level as to maintain and ensure the well-being of the two states. I want Mauritania to agree with us on this point.

We Hope the Algerians Understand Our Position

[Question] After recent developments, from the Algiers agreement to the raising of the Moroccan flag over the city of al-Dakhilah, the capital of the Rio de Oro region, the ball appears to be in the Algerian court. How do you evaluate the Algerian position?

[Answer] You have seen the spontaneous responses of the Rio de Oro inhabitants after the signing of the Algiers agreement. It was these reactions which made us adopt some necessary measures so that the authorities managing the region's affairs would not get into problems with the local inhabitants, who had expressed their attachment to their Moroccan-ness. After that they came to Rabat to pay homage according to the prevailing traditions of that area and of Islamic countries in general.

And now the region faces a new situation, although it is the natural one. Our most urgent, greatest desire is that Algeria understand this situation, so that there can be stability and so that we can build a real peace in the future. This will not be achieved by driving a wedge which people call Polisario, which is generating a serious problem which none of us need.

Morocco's genuine desire is to build up the region economically and socially, and to establish a political rapprochement confirming this desire. We also hope that the Algerian officials will carry on the goals which Morocco is striving to achieve. We certainly don't want them to take the opposite line, the road to expansion and hegemony at Morocco's expense, for this is something we will definitely not accept.

[Question] It is said that the Algerian forces have entered the Nouadhibou region on Mauritania's northern borders with Morocco. Is this true?

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[Answer] I don't know anything about this. Some of the news agencies have reported something on that order.

[Question] It is said that there is a feeling of anger on the part of Morocco towards the American refusal to supply you with arms. In fact, there are some American circles which call for not giving Morocco arms because, according to their claims, that would encourage the army to escalate the military situation and expand the scope of the fighting.

[Answer] We cannot look at the problem this way. There were some questions among American circles a year ago, especially about the difference between administration and sovereignty, but after the statements and contacts made with American officials, and after the King of Morocco's visit to the United States, the American position softened and relations resumed their normal course. I don't know if there is any American opposition to Morocco which refuses to support it and give it the goods and arms it needs.

[Question] Does that mean that the United States has responded to Morocco's request to be supplied with arms?

[Answer] Yes.

[Question] Some international circles have proposed the internationalization of the Sahara issue, by bringing in other international parties in an attempt to find a compromise.

[Answer] We feel that this issue has gotten more attention than it deserves in the international sphere. The fact is that it is a completely internal issue. If in the past we have brought it up before international circles, that was in order to eliminate the colonialism which was so clearly connected with a certain European colonialist state. However, as soon as the original inhabitants returned to their natural situation, they plainly expressed their views. We played our part by carrying out our international commitment--fulfilling the Security Council's call for conducting negotiations with the colonialist states according to the provisions of Article 33 of the UN charter.

Anything else is an infringement of Moroccan internal affairs. In the future, Morocco will conduct itself in this manner in everything pertaining to this issue.

#### The Required Dialog With Algeria

[Question] There are direct Moroccan contacts with the Mauritanian side, and there are direct contacts between Algeria and Mauritania. Are there any direct or indirect contacts between Morocco and Algeria?

[Answer] As of now, I don't know. But in the past, before the death of President Boumediene, there were contacts on the possibility of arranging a high-level meeting between the King and the late President. Then this page was turned.

[Question] And during the last OAU conference?

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[Answer] There were no contacts in the real sense of the word, but there were personal contacts, although not to study the problems existing between the two countries. The normal situation, as expressed by some African states, is that no real, decisive solution can be reached without a constructive dialog between Morocco and Algeria.

[Question] But are there Moroccan preconditions for direct contacts with Algeria?

[Answer] No, there are no preconditions for contacts, or for sitting down at one table to build an Arab North Africa. This is our real conviction, and we are convinced that there will be no progress or mutual understanding without a peaceful environment among the parties of the region.

[Question] On the other hand, are there Algerian conditions for opening the door to discussion?

[Answer] In President Chadli Bendjedid's statement, Algeria stipulated a condition we cannot except--giving up the Sahara.

[Question] Obviously the region is on the edge of explosion. Or can that be avoided?

[Answer] We don't want war, but you must understand, on the other hand, that we will not stand by with our arms folded in the face of aggression and the exertion of force against our territorial integrity.

[Question] In your capacity as leader of one of the major Moroccan political blocs, what do you think is the domestic stand towards the Sahara issue?

[Answer] We feel that territorial integrity and the Sahara are the causes of the entire people. There is complete consensus among the various political groupings about supporting and backing King Hasan II's stand. We feel that this is one of the fundamentals revealing the true face of Morocco, something which our enemy does not have.

Insistence on territorial integrity reveals just how attached the Moroccans are to their Sahara, although they differ on other issues.

[Question] Do you believe that recent developments in the region call for the establishment of a national federal government comprising all Moroccan political trends?

[Answer] This is a secondary question. We are not against a national federal government aiming at adding other elements not present in the existing coalition government. But everyone, inside or outside the government, has a unified stand on the national issue.

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#### Between Rumor and Fact

[Question] Has there been any talk about a cabinet change?

[Answer] There are rumors, which outnumber what is actually being done in official circles on this matter.

[Question] There are those who accuse Moroccan diplomacy of weakness and hesitancy, and who feel that the Monrovia conference resolutions and the recommendations of the arbitration committee were a defeat for Morocco.

[Answer] As for the recommendations of the arbitration committee, they didn't astonish us. As for the OAU's stand, it is a repetition of previous resolutions about self-determination. We tried to make those people understand that this principle had actually been applied, and had been achieved with the Saharans' demand to return to Morocco. This is what we would have done originally, if things had gone along without chaos and tumult.

If the recommendations made by the arbitration committee had concentrated on finding sound ways of eliminating the tension in the region, and had tried to remove the causes of possible confrontation between Morocco and Algeria, we would have welcomed these recommendations with open arms. We told the committee, the formation of which was recommended by the OAU, that the right to self-determination is a subsidiary factor as far as we are concerned, because the matter here pertains to our territorial integrity. Nonetheless, in compliance with their wishes, we are making it plain to them that the right to self-determination has been legitimately applied through the elections held in the region, and the residents of the region have fully expressed their desire.

However, we feel that the recommendations were formulated in a chaotic atmosphere spread by some states during the Monrovia conference, and that the resolution of the arbitration committee was an irresponsible one.

We are most definitely unconvinced that Morocco has become diplomatically isolated since the Monrovia conference. On the contrary, the states which enjoy some degree of equilibrium will return to support our stand. At present we are making contacts on various levels, and we are receiving encouraging support from everyone.

#### Europe Is Neutral

[Question] And is there encouraging support from Europe as well?

[Answer] No, the Western states prefer to remain neutral

The Moroccan minister laughed and said, "That's the way it is. But as the Moroccan stand becomes clearer, so will matters become clearer. We have stressed the need to continue brotherly contacts between us and Mauritania, affirming our desire to continue providing the aid which we have provided in the past, on

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condition that Mauritania not become a center of enmity towards us. The officials have stressed their desire to continue relations with Morocco, calling for finding a peaceful solution to the Saharan issue."

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MOROCCO

RNI LEADER DISCUSSES BACKGROUND TO SAHARA ISSUE

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 31-Aug-5 Sep 79 pp 30-31

[Interview With RNI Leader Ahmed Osman, Conducted by Faruq Abu-Zahr]

[Excerpts] AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI is continuing its examination into the opinions of Moroccan officials and politicians on the Sahara issue, and is today publishing an interview with Ahmed Osman, the leader of the main party in the government coalition. There has been a new escalation of developments with the Polisario attack on the Moroccan town of al-Buwayrat during the 'Id al-Fitr holiday.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with Ahmed Osman, former Moroccan prime minister and head of the National Rally of Independents (RNI), the largest political force in the parliament, which constitutes a majority in the present government coalition.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI also met with the Socialist Union of People's Forces, the largest political force in the opposition, represented by Mohamed El Yazghi, the number-two man after its Secretary General Abderrahim Bouabid, who is in Europe undergoing treatment.

Here is the text of the interview with Osman, and in the next issue we will publish the discussion with El Yazghi. The reader will perhaps observe the similarity in the stand on the Sahara issue between the government supporters and the opposition, which is an expression of the consistent national Moroccan stand towards this fateful issue.

Weapons Are Not For Everyone

I said to Ahmed Osman, "You led the Green March in 1975, and were one of the first to call for distributing arms to the people of the Sahara. Was that a warning and a herald from you of what is now happening?"

[Answer] In general, at all festivals I, in the name of the RNI, would call for arming the citizens living along the borders, because we were starting from a clear-cut theory--that however strong the regime's forces, they must be strengthened and supported by the Moroccan people, for this will make our

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forces always superior to the enemy forces. But we must give arms only to certain tribes, not to everyone. These tribes are known for their courage, and we have complete trust in them.

In another context, we have called and are still calling for the formation of light units--I don't say commandos, for that is not the right word. I don't want to impose any solution on the military command, but it would be nice if there were rapid units intermeshed with and supporting the Moroccan armed forces, for we are anticipating an escalation in the situation and we must fortify ourselves, even though we are a peaceable country and we don't want to attack anyone.

[Question] There was a call to establish a Saharan entity in the area under Mauritanian administration, but you had an opposing opinion. Why?

[Answer] This concept was current a year ago. I don't know where it started--Europe? Africa? Some people here and abroad see a solution in it, whereby the territory of Tiris El-Gharbia would be given to the Polisario or to Algeria, according to an agreement guaranteed by the superpowers, and thereby the problem would be ended.

I feel that this proposal is childish, first because Algeria will not be satisfied with this portion because it would not enable it to reach the sea except through the Western Sahara. Secondly, assuming that they are content with that region, it would definitely be a jumping-off point for aggression against us and Mauritania.

Unfortunately, the rulers of Mauritania are obviously naive and don't understand the situation. They would be the first victim, for the region would be changed into a red-hot arena of problems and stability, just as we see here and there in Africa. Naturally, this would concern all the states of the region, especially Mauritania, and would also concern the superpowers.

I personally am opposed to this solution. In my view it doesn't make sense for us to accept a solution depending on Tiris El-Gharbia without finding a solution to the Sahara issue as a whole.

[Question] How do you envisage the peaceful solution to the Western Sahara?

[Answer] We agree to negotiations with Algeria, for the matter basically depends on good neighborliness between the two countries. Colonialism left the region in November 1975, and we are ready to consult and negotiate in order to improve the region's circumstances and to fulfil its states' aspirations to build a greater Arab Morocco in which brotherliness and cooperation prevails.

After that, the border issue becomes secondary. The starting point is respect for the natural territory of each country. We will never dispute the matter of the Algerian Sahara, and in the past we opposed General Charles de Gaulle's plan aimed at separating the Sahara from the rest of Algeria by means of a referendum organized by the French administration. We opposed the notion,

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saying that Algeria must liberate all of its Sahara. Algeria ought to accept this logic with respect to the Western Sahara.

[Question] Let's go back to the previous agreements between the two countries. For example, why wasn't the Ifrane agreement signed in 1972 implemented?

[Answer] What happened at Ifrane was merely a cooperation and solidarity agreement. There was a more important agreement signed between Morocco and Algeria after the 1972 African summit conference in Rabat. It dealt with the territorial integrity and the issue of cooperation, two matters which are firmly linked, for Algeria cannot apply one and reject the other. This is what actually happened. Algeria signed the agreement after a short time, and we are waiting for the parliament to ratify it.

What happened was that Algeria violated the spirit and text of the agreement on a number of occasions. Only two months later, during the regular UN session, the Algerian maneuvers over the Sahara issue began. During the 1972 session Algeria introduced the notion of "concerned parties" into the matter, claiming that it was concerned with the issue. Naturally, that led to a halt in activity on the economic and cooperation side. As we see it, the agreement no longer exists.

Morocco Opens the Tindouf Dossier

[Question] With respect to the current situation, Morocco is considering ceding the Tindouf (border) region, and the agreement basically means giving up this rich region...

Osman interrupted me, asking, "We are ceding Tindouf? You cannot say that. Naturally, the implementation of the agreement might call for that, but it is not being applied. Each party to the agreement has the right to act."

[Question] Meaning that the border problem still exists?

[Answer] The border problem actually still exists between Morocco and Algeria. This much is clear. The agreement is not being applied. His Highness King Hasan II gave a valuable opportunity to his neighbors, but they wasted it.

[Question] In your capacity as head of the largest parliamentary bloc, do the current events call for the establishment of a national federal government?

[Answer] Right now we have a coalition government incorporating a considerable number of the country's parties. Alongside the government exists a very important organization, the National Security Committee, headed by His Highness, which includes all the political authorities. Events oblige us to defend our territory, to drop side issues, and to dedicate all our efforts to protecting and safeguarding the nation.

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We Lack Money and Allocations

[Question] Does it also demand development of the Moroccan army's resources?

[Answer] The Moroccan army is continually being developed.

[Question] And as for the difficulty in acquiring American arms?

[Answer] By God, the question is not one of difficulty in acquiring arms, but is one of allocations and money. The arms are there whenever we want them, and in general it can be said that our army is in a state of continual development. The fact is that the Green March was protected by our armed forces, which actively participated in it.

[Question] After the Monrovia summit conference and the recommendations of the "arbitration committee," some people accused Moroccan diplomacy of failure and indecision.

[Answer] I don't like to criticize, but it must be recognized that there are shortcomings. The least that can be said is that at the Monrovia conference we could have done more to succeed.

First, with respect to the arbitration committee, perhaps we should have denounced its formation. For example, we accepted Tanzania's membership in the committee, knowing that it supported the camp hostile to us. We should have rejected its membership as soon as it recognized the Polisario. Tanzania has become an adversary, not an arbiter.

As for the other member, Mali, we should have rejected its membership as well, especially after its foreign minister's visit to Algeria and the statements he made in support of the Algerian point of view. We should have had reservations about the validity of the committee as a whole.

I don't know if the widespread chaos in the Monrovia conference was the reason for the Moroccan delegation's inability to explain the facts. It was said to me that the president of the conference refused to give the head of the Moroccan delegation the right to speak. In addition, according to the agreement made during last year's Khartoum African summit conference, the report of the arbitration committee should have been presented during the extraordinary conference. What happened was that the recommendations were presented during the regular conference in the Liberian capital.

As for the voting in the OAU, it is unimportant because it is neither a parliament or a government. Efforts must be made to reach some settlement, and an attempt must be made to convince the parties concerned with the matter. It is meaningless for the delegate of Botswana to vote alongside the rebels and determine the fate of an entire nation.

We tried to establish an arbitration committee during the Libreville conference, and we made a personal effort to do so. At the same time, Algeria was against the idea at the Khartoum summit. Unfortunately, the committee exceeded the task assigned to it.

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The Sahara Issue Is an Arab One

[Question] Can the Arab League play a designated role in the struggle?

[Answer] Above all the issue is an Arab one, between two Arab Moslem countries. We must not forget that the Arabs had their say during the 1974 Rabat conference. President Boumediene had his say as well, but he changed his mind, as he himself acknowledged. He said, "Actually, in 1974 I spoke of Morocco's right to the Sahara, but now we have a new policy. We support the Saharan people and the Polisario now, and we will supply them with equipment and men."

This was an unfortunate position, for the question is basically one of good-neighborliness or unneighborliness, the balance between some states in the region, and the relations between them--strong ones perhaps, but not good neighbor relations.

As for the talk about the right to self-determination, I ask, "Where in the world has this principle been applied? (Here the former Moroccan prime minister had a long laugh.)

[Question] You said that Mauritania would be the greatest victim of what happened recently. What do you mean by that?

[Answer] Mauritania is threatened with an explosion. The fact is that heading this nation today is a group of people who are unfamiliar with affairs of state. By God, this is strange, for this is the first time in history that a group heading a nation sacrificed territory without recompense, the first time that a state abandoned territory so easily without losing it in a war, for example.

We have offered countless support, in view of its limited means and the deprivation it suffers from. We must point out the exemplary conduct of the Moroccan army in Mauritania. Our soldiers are always offering aid to the Mauritanian citizens--provisions and medicines as well as daily necessities. The Moroccan army did not interfere in internal matters during the first and second coups.

[Question] Let us go back again to the issue of establishing a national federal government. Do you personally agree to its establishment?

[Answer] Naturally, the government is an important tool for facilitating affairs of state, but the matter depends on His Highness. He might maintain the existing government or bring in another government. But the important thing is to avoid discord.

The Moroccan officials do not want the people to live in want. Perhaps the time has come to review some of the ways we live. This is a bitter fact. We must anticipate bad things from adversaries. The Moroccan people are prepared to sacrifice, provided that in this case the way be made clear to them. This is our duty as a government and as political authorities. Our people are ready for conscription. All these matters depend on His Highness, whose experience

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has been proven through his wisdom and experience. My final word is that everyone must be mobilized in deed, not word, to face the situation and the future possibilities.

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TUNISIA

OPPOSITIONIST BRAHIM TOBAL REFLECTS ON SITUATION IN TUNISIA

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 20 Aug - 17 Sep 79 pp 29,30

[Article by Brahim Tobal: "Destour: What Congress?"]

[Text] The congress of the Destour party, which meets next 5 September, has inspired the following reflections by Mr Brahim Tobal, the leader of the national Tunisian opposition, reflections which mirror the concerns of the people.

Little tactical maneuvers to win over the undecided--as in the case of Bouraoui--going so far as using the army against the trade union demonstrators of the UGTT [General Federation of Tunisian Labor], the Destour regime, which finds itself today facing several impasses, has used every means to assure its survival.

But what it is proposing is ridiculous. A brilliant idea, certainly, which offers us, in order to get out of the crisis, nothing more than this, the reinstatement of totalitarian regimes: the institutionalization of the single party, which is dying and is so discredited that its own secretary general had to denounce it not long ago as the den of opportunists and unscrupulous people of all sorts.

Another brilliant idea is the electoral list on which there are twice as many candidates as there are seats in a national assembly which is, by its mission and its nature, a recording body. This idea is an old one of Tahar Belkhodja, the former minister of the interior, at the very moment when the Destour congress, which will open next 5 September, is being organized. And what showmanship and solemnity went into the announcement of the release--conditional, of nine prisoners, grossly and unjustly condemned for their political opinions, an act which cannot make us forget that dozens of other political militants and trade unionists are rotting in the miserable jails of the regime and which cannot, either, make us accept the label, dear to those in power, of a moderate and temperate Tunisia. This spectacular gesture is a vain one because everyone knows that the release of Habib Achour was not due to presidential clemency but to international pressure and to internal struggles which have continued since 26 January

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1978. Because we know also that Achour will remain the hostage of the government as long as his companions in the executive office of the UGTT remain in prison.

No. We do not see in that a demonstration of clemency but rather a detestable Machiavellism. Out of all that, one thing stands out clearly: everything starts with Bourguiba and everything comes back to him, whatever they say of his illnesses and of his withdrawal from the affairs of state. He is the only one in charge, even if, like Pontius Pilate, he has to wash his hands and find the necessary alibis. Prime Minister Hedi Nour and the director of the Sayah Party are only, in the final analysis, the executors of the will of the master, which is right in the Destour tradition, which consists in dividing responsibilities in order to direct better the crises of the system. The retirement of Bourguiba and the death of his regime will inevitably coincide, whoever his designated heir might be. And he knows this, since he keeps saying: "I am the system."

The Crucial Problems

Founding a strategy on a possible "continuator" is to move, in our opinion, directly toward failure. To take charge of the post-Bourguiba period is to begin already to challenge all the claimants coming out of this regime, whoever they may be. That being the case, if the problem of Bourguiba's successor as chief of state and of its various mechanisms, constitutes the background on which the Destour congress will take place, the crucial problems faced by the Tunisian people will remain steadfastly ignored. Rereading the abundant literature which, on the eve of the meetings, is being circulated in Tunis, one notices, certainly, that the Nour government (which has been strengthened since December by the addition of a few technocrats) not only is not in control of the social and economic situation, but also does not know how to say what are, and what might become, its nature and its political continuation.

They say this crisis is a consequence of the world economic depression, of the wild consumption by Tunisians (of whom about two thirds are on the verge of malnutrition), even that it is due to weather conditions! The government ought to admit, however, that the wage freeze (which is causing a sharp decrease in the buying power of the masses), that the facilities granted by the EEC to textile exports, that the flow of petrodollars brought in by "tourists" from the gulf and from Saudi Arabia have not, to say the very least, contributed to lessening the effects. On the contrary, the crisis is worsening and is disproving the alibi of the government, which claims in this way to justify "infatih" [translation unknown]: the creation of jobs.

The lost search for "social peace" is merely the necessary political counterpart of the economic policy followed since 1970 by the regime and which consists, because of the laws of 1972 and 1974, of making Tunisia a "tax paradise" for foreign investors (particularly French and West German) of making room for imperialism and neocolonialism and of inserting the Tunisian



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economy into the world capitalist market, by invoking the classic pretexts of under-industrialization and export industries which are tightly controlled by the multinationals. A plan for society, the one which will be proposed to the Destour congress, underlies the whole structure: building a "median society."

It must be emphasized here that since the word "class" was banned from the official political vocabulary, this terminology was quickly invented to avoid speaking of a "middle class society."

Ten years later, Tunisia is at the same point. It is certainly not blocked. But it is marking time, and time is inescapably playing against the carrying out of this "grand plan" of the regime. The delays registered in all areas, the deficits in the trade balance and foreign financing, domestic tax pressure which is weighing heavily on national producers, the exorbitant rates paid by the government (using public funds) to foreign investors, without getting anything in exchange, etc., are the obvious signs of a fatigue which the regime can combat only by giving up a little more national sovereignty and reducing the standard of living of the people.

The official explanation of this economic morass (the world crisis) is not enough. If the crisis has effects in Tunisia, it is not because of a blind mechanism, it is the result of a deliberate choice which dates from 1970. All the developing countries are not being affected by the world crisis in the same way, precisely, but according to the political and economic choices that they made in the preceding years. The fault with the official explanation, a classic fault, comes from the fact that they want to attribute to a "strange phenomenon coming from somewhere else" what should be attributed immediately to internal decisions taken to serve precise class interests and to assure the success of strategies of domination.

The result is that today one sees a few foreign investors pull out with juicy profits and one sees the resignation of local business buyers on which Nouria was claiming to found his economic system. They left behind themselves a padded bill, which the Tunisian people are still paying off. Another result: more than ever the "median society" has become one of the illusions maintained by official propaganda; more than ever the gap between the mass of poor Tunisians and the minority of rich Tunisians is widening; more than ever the split between the workers and the bosses who are exploiting them is deepening.

Even the modest rights of the retired workers to social security and to family allocations are, today, the object of middle class attacks on the part of the bosses and of the government, which finds they are too high.

The failure is due essentially to the organized and conscious refusal of the workers in the UGTT to accept national and social subservience. We see it today: the major concern of the government is to end the popular and trade union resistance, which is continuing in spite of political trials and massacres. In spite, also, of the "public relations" operations

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which cannot fool seasoned militants who have made up their minds to give a political and economic content to the struggle of the Tunisian people for their total independence and to obtain by force autonomy for the UGTT in order to make it a democratic and combative union.

Let no one be mistaken; the independence of the country and trade union independence are the major stakes in all the struggles, active and passive which are being led today. The crisis was born out of that and it is on the battleground of these struggles that it will be solved or not, in some sort of political context, even if it is that of the congress of a Destour which has, more than ever, its future behind it.

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TUNISIA

'LIMITED PARDON' OF TRADE UNIONIST ACHOUR CALLED INSUFFICIENT .

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 20 Aug - 17 Sep 79 p 30

[Article by Anis Wahid: "A Pardon but Not Amnesty"]

[Text] In deciding on a limited pardon, Bourguiba has not responded to the requirements of the situation. Mr Habib Achour, the rightful secretary general of the office of the UGTT [Tunisian General Federation of Labor], who was sentenced on 10 October 1978 to 10 years at hard labor, was released on 3 August on the occasion of the 76th birthday of President Bourguiba. Expected for a long time, in Tunisia as well as abroad, the belated pardon will now have the appearance of a limited release. Mr Achour is reported to have been placed under house arrest in his villa in El Menzah and entry to his home is denied to all visitors, except his children.

It is undeniable that the freeing of the secretary general of the UGTT is due, to a great extent, to national and international pressure, which has never weakened since the massacre on 26 January 1978. Internal considerations also played a role, since this action was taken a few weeks before the opening of the tenth congress of the Destour Socialist Party. The operation does not seem, however, to have yielded the anticipated results: most of the political and labor organizations, which praised the release of Mr Achour, deplore the continued imprisonment of a hundred or so political and trade-union prisoners. Certain European socialist parties invited by the Destour party made it known that they would not participate in the work of the 10th Congress of the PSD [Destour Socialist Party].

None of the union officials (all of whom were members of the Executive Bureau of the UGTT prior to 26 January 1978, and who received sentences at the same time as Mr Achour of from 5 to 10 years in prison, have been released, which has greatly reduced the effect of the presidential clemency, which is believed by some to have been motivated more by humanitarian considerations than by political ones (at 76, Mr Achour suffers from hypertension and diabetes).

For its part, the Movement for Popular Unity (MUP) feels that the measure "translates the embarrassment of the government, since it has freed the

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person it has always claimed, wrongly, was responsible for the bloody events of 26 January 1978, while it continues to hold in custody the other officers of the union." Announced by the chief of state in person, the pardon was extended to the five oldest political prisoners in Tunisia, now called by them "the forgotten men of Bordj er-Roumi." Militants from the group known formerly as "Perspectives," and later as "El Amel Tounsi," they have spent more than 10 years in prison, after Bourguiba had withdrawn 5 years ago a decree which pardoned them. Weakened physically, they are now free, thanks in particular to the international campaign (in which this newspaper participated) conducted on their behalf a few months ago.

What Opening?

Freeing these prisoners shows, certainly, a retreat on the part of the government. Indeed, it would be hasty and premature to consider this action as a harbinger of political change in Tunisia, and even less as the beginning of a political liberalization. Certainly, Mr Chatty and Mr Kooli, the former ministers of foreign affairs and of health, respectively, who had resigned a few weeks before 26 January 1978, rushed to the palace at Carthage at the call of President Bourguiba to make honorable amends and to return to the Destourian bosom, while Mr Taher Belkhodja was also said to be getting ready to be received by the "Supreme Combattant."

What is more, certain people, who obviously do not understand the true nature of Bourguiba's power, now seem to be thinking of an "opening" and, because of that, have taken a dead end. For the Tunisian Government is still not willing to give up the instruments of repression.

General and unconditional amnesty for all political and trade-union prisoners, which has been called for by all the political sectors in Tunisia, has not taken place. Nevertheless, only that, as the respect for rights and the return of the union officials to the posts they held before 26 January 1978, can bring Tunisia out of the political impasse in which it has been for many years.

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WESTERN SAHARA

POLISARIO DETERMINED TO MAKE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR MOROCCO

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 5 Sep 79 p 21

[Article: "Sahara: War at its Heels"]

[Text] The Battle of Biranzaren (J.A. No 973) had not yet finished teaching its lesson when a new attack was launched by the POLISARIO on Friday, August 24, against Lebouirate, a village located 150 km inside uncontested Morocco. The confrontation was brutal: for the first time it was favorable to the Saharan fighters who occupied the territory and, according to their account, killed 230 Moroccan soldiers. This outcome, if confirmed, represents pretty accurately the effectiveness of the Moroccan Armed Forces entrusted with the defense of Lebouirate.

Without citing figures, Rabat acknowledged the extent of the operation, and pointed out nevertheless that the garrison commander "had not used suitable means in resisting the enemy, and who even abandoned his defense positions as well as part of his weaponry." The Moroccan authorities added that "the guilty will be punished," and have announced that Lebouirate has been recaptured by relief forces.

The acts of aggression at Biranzaren and Lebouirate, committed within 15 days of each other, indicate to what extent the POLISARIO is determined to make life difficult for Morocco, after the latter's recovery of the former Tiris el Gharbia--a recovery which further accentuates that kingdom's isolation on the African chessboard. The recent recognition of the SDAR (Saharan Democratic Arab Republic) by the new Ghanan regime is one proof of this. During that time, King Hassan II did not appear at all discouraged, having always been the recipient of his people's unconditional support. His appeals for reconciliation concerning Algeria are multiplying, and his charm tactics with regard to the United States, from whom he has requested new arms shipments, are becoming more persistent. While awaiting the U.S. Senate's decision on such shipments, Morocco has already gotten its "installment": six Augusta Bell combat helicopters manufactured in Italy under a U.S. license.

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WESTERN SAHARA

SAHARAN WAR SAID TO THREATEN MOROCCAN THRONE

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 9 Sep 79 p 41

[Text] The impression that the Saharan war is being waged with almost catastrophic results for Morocco was confirmed only 7 days after King Hassan II announced to 200 newsmen from all over the world, that the struggle to defend the annexation of the former Mauritanean Sahara will continue to the end.

According to an announcement issued in Algiers, the city of Lebourite in the southeastern region of Morocco--1956 border--and 150 km from Tindouf, the guerrilla base on Algerian territory, was in the hand of the Polisario guerrillas for 24 hours on Friday 24 August. In the entire history of the conflict, this was the most daring Polisario action and victory.

The death toll among Moroccan troops was estimated at almost 800. Wounded and prisoners were also in the hundreds. The capture of weapons--7 Strela missiles, 81 mortars, 100 machine guns and 51 trucks--was spectacular.

The seriousness of the disaster forced the Rabat government to report it officially and with harsh details, blaming the defeat on the post commander in chief, Azelmat, and announcing that an investigation would begin to determine responsibilities.

The Army is Uneasy

If the Rabat government carries out its purpose, it is sure that the malaise, already present within the army, will increase. The army, in addition to feeling uneasy with what the Moroccan officers consider inefficiency of the central government, knows that it is at a disadvantage in desert warfare.

This disadvantage, in principle is one of morale, and is the result of a series of successive defeats. The Moroccan numerical superiority is offset by the experience of the Polisario guerrillas, used to this type of combat in which they are veterans. For any Moroccan soldier it is necessary to go through desert warfare training before he can go into combat.

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If this were not enough, the spectacular escalation of Polisario armament--whose Sam-7 missiles give them decisive advantage in air control--is threatening to make come true the forecast that the war would become the grave of Hassan II.

In addition, the Alaquite monarch is on the eve of suffering another serious diplomatic defeat at the Conference of Nonaligned Nations in Havana, where the recent condemnation by the African summit in Monrovia will be repeated and will be harsher in tone.

Hassan's diplomatic counteroffensive began at the same time. The king has the unconditional support of all Moroccan political forces, united without divisions in the case of annexation of Sahara.

Ruinous War

Socialist leader Abderrahim Bouabib, however, in recent statements said with alarm that Morocco perhaps would not be able to pay or withstand the price of the war. Military expenses for 1979 are estimated at a billion dollars. The Sahara conflict daily swallows 160 million pesetas of the public treasury.

The civilian morale is also beginning to suffer. The king's message on the Day of the Revolution of the King and People was followed with obvious indifference on the streets of Rabat. Hassan, thus, is at a critical moment in spite of never having had in the history of his reign such unanimous domestic public support.

However, the battle has to be won abroad, especially in Washington which maintains its policy of arms embargo against Morocco. In an interview granted to U. S. weekly NEWSWEEK, Hassan opened fire touching a sensitive spot, especially in U.S. leading circles.

The Alaquite monarch justified the annexation of Sahara, adducing that there was real danger of Cuban intervention in the Mauritanian administration zone. In the same interview, Hassan II insinuated that the possibility was not being discarded of a meeting with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, to try to reach an agreement.

The sharp verbal artillery of Hassan was aimed now against Libya, indicating that "millionaire" Colonel Qadhafi "did not mind" the bloodletting of the war. Algeria could not maintain a war with Morocco. According to experts, a direct confrontation would necessarily be limited to border skirmishes, for economic reasons.

Therefore, now Hassan is trying to create a split among the Algerian forces who support the Polisarios. As a sign of good will, the king has suggested the possibility that Morocco cede a corridor in Sahara to give Algeria an outlet to the Atlantic.

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For his part, Carter is facing a serious dilemma, comparable to the one he was facing when the Shah was tottering, according to a well-informed statement by the influential U.S. newsman Arnaud de Borchgrave. On the same pages of NEWSWEEK, Borchgrave recalls that Morocco is the oldest ally of the United States and warns of a possible debacle that Hassan's downfall would mean for the West, an event that would inexorably follow a defeat in the war.

Hassan's support to the Shah in his most difficult days would now be rewarded. Now Hassan is knocking at the doors of the White House.

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